

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /071 W

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R 271832Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0795

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLAB, FR

SUBJECT: RALLY BY THE LEFT

1. SUMMARY: JUNE 26 RALLY BY THE LEFT REVEALS IN-
ABILITY OF THE LEFT TO MOBILIZE FRENCH PUBLIC ON
CREDIBLE THEMES WHICH WOULD CAST DOUBT ON GOF'S MANAGE-
MENT OF THE COUNTRY. END SUMMARY.

2. THE WARM AFTERNOON OF 26 JUNE GAVE PARIS ITS
FIRST MASS RALLY OF THE YEAR, ORGANIZED BY UNIONS
AND PARTIES OF THE LEFT IN "DEFENSE OF LIBERTIES".
ORIGINALLY CALLED BY CGT-CFDT AND SUBSEQUENTLY JOINED
BY FEN (NATIONAL EDUCATION) AND BY THE UNITED LEFT
PARTIES (PC, PS, AND LEFT RADICALS), THE RALLY WAS
BILLED AS A PROTEST AGAINST ALLEGED ESCALATION OF
"GOF REPRESSION AND VIOLENCE TO UNDERMINE TRADE UNION
FREEDOM AND RIGHTS".

3. ORGANIZERS CLAIMED 100,000 PARTICIPANTS WHILE THE
POLICE GIVE AN ESTIMATE OF 20,000. NUMBERS, HOWEVER,
ARE BECOMING SECONDARY FACTORS BECAUSE ONE MUST
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ASSUME THAT IF THE SIX ORGANIZATIONS ABOVE COULD NOT

BRING TO THE STREETS, REGARDLESS OF CAUSE, 50 TO 100 THOUSAND PEOPLE THEN THEY HAVE LITTLE PLACE IN THE BUSINESS OF POLITICS. THE MORE INTERESTING POINTS ABOUT THE RALLY ARE ELSEWHERE:

(A) PARISIANS, BUT ALSO THE POLITICAL CIRCLES, WERE SURPRISED TO REALIZE SUDDENLY THAT THIS WAS THE FIRST RALLY UNIONS AND OPPOSITION PARTIES HAD CALLED SINCE 12 DECEMBER 1974 QUITE A LONG TIME GIVEN THE AGGRAVATION OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION SINCE THEN. WHILE THE PC-PS SQUABBLING PLAYED A ROLE IN PREVENTING ANY STREET DEMONSTRATION OF LEFT MILITANCY, THE BASIC REASON FOR THE SITUATION IS THAT THE REGIME HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN DEPRIVING THE OPPOSITION OF MASS MOBILIZATION THEMES.

(B) THE ALLEGATIONS ABOUT "GOF REPRESSION AND VIOLENCE" SIMPLY CARRIES NO CREDIBILITY AT ALL WITH ANY SEGMENT OF THE FRENCH PUBLIC EXCEPT FOR HARD CORE PCF MEMBERS. IN FACT NOTHING IS MORE REVEALING OF THE CGT-PCF DESPERATE NEED FOR SOME KIND OF EVIDENCE TO SUSTAIN ITS ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE GOF THAN THE EAGERNESS WITH WHICH THEY SEIZED AN INCIDENT WHERE A YOUNG STUDENT DRIVER LOST CONTROL OF HIS VEHICLE AND RAN INTO A GROUP OF STRIKERS IN CLICY WOUNDING 9 OF THEM, TO CRY "FASCISM AND RACISM". FOR A MOMENT IT LOOKED AS THOUGH THE WHOLE RALLY OF 26 JUNE WAS DEPENDENT ON THAT INCIDENT.

(C) THE ONLY OTHER EVIDENCE OF FASCISM AND REPRESSIVE POLICIES DISCOVERED BY CGT WAS THE USE OF POLICE DOGS BY THE GUARDS OF PREMISES OF MAJOR ENTERPRISES ON STRIKE.

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(D) FEN PARTICIPATION IN RALLY RAISED MANY EYEBROWS AND AS MANY QUESTIONS. FEN SEC GEN HENRI WAS NOT VERY PROUD ABOUT IT WHEN HE TALKED TO LABATT ON 23 JUNE, BUT HE HAD RESIGNED TO IT AS A RANSOM HE HAD TO PAY TO THE OPPOSITION FACTIONS WITHIN FEN IN ORDER TO GIVE HIS MAJORITY GREATER ROOM FOR MANEUVER.

(E) AS WAS WIDELY REPORTED IN TODAY'S PRESS, THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE RALLY WERE CGT-PCF MEMBERS. THIS ADDED SUPPORT TO THE VIEW THAT THE RALLY IDEA AND WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT THE THEME OF THE RALLY WAS CONCEIVED BY THE PCF TO SERVE ITS OWN SPECIAL INTERESTS.

4. THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT PCF FINDS ITSELF HARASSED AS EVENTS IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD FOCUS SHARP ATTENTION ON CIVIL LIBERTIES AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION. HENCE, THE RESORT TO THE TACTICS OF REVERSING THE ACCUSATIONS SO AS TO MAKE THE GOF TARGET LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF SUSPICION THAT IT USES REPRESSIVE MEASURES IN ORDER TO REDUCE WORKER RESISTENCE TO ECONOMIC SACRIFICES. THE FAITHFUL TAKE THESE ACCUSATIONS ON FACE VALUE BUT THE GENERAL PUBLIC REJECTS THEM. UNLIKE PCI (ITALY) THE PCF CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT LOSS OF CREDIBILITY WITH THE ELECTORATE IS NOT TOO BIG A PRICE TO PAY TO KEEP TOTAL COMMITMENT AND OBEDIENCE TO THE "PCF TRUTH" BY ITS RANK AND FILE.
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